

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

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NEWS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CALIFORNIA CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM PASSES FEDERAL DATA RELIABILITY AUDIT, SAVING THE STATE MORE THAN \$100 MILLION

SACRAMENTO —The Department of Child Support Services (DCSS)'s significant improvements in its data reliability has saved the state more than \$100 million in federal penalties and earned the department performance incentives from the federal government, DCSS Director Curtis L. Child announced today.

Child made the announcement following notification from the federal Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) that DCSS passed the Federal Fiscal Year 2002 Data Reliability Audit with flying colors.

"Our strong performance on the data reliability audit not only ensures DCSS' eligibility for federal performance bonuses, but it also means that we have put behind us once and for all the historical problems that plagued the California child support program before this Administration took over," Child said.

The data reliability audit is conducted each year to determine whether performance measurement data reported by state child support programs was accurate, complete and secure. The federal Child Support Performance and Incentive Act of 1998 imposes substantial penalties on states that fail to achieve at least 95 percent data reliability on performance indicators.

States that fail the audit and do not implement a successful corrective action plan in the subsequent federal fiscal year face penalties of one to two percent of their entire TANF Block Grant (\$37 to \$74 million for California) and are not eligible to share in federal incentive payments.

Child said CDCSS has been working diligently to improve the accuracy of its data reporting since the new Department was created in 2000. In FFY 2001 the program's data failed only one measure – paternity establishment – in the federal audit.

The DCSS corrected that problem by embarking on an aggressive review plan in which each of the 58 local child support agencies reviewed all paternity case records, including checking individual records, system programming, policy direction, and practices and procedures to ensure data accuracy and reliability.

Passing the federal audit for the paternity establishment measure at 100 percent in 2002 saves the state more than \$100 million in penalty payments on that measure, alone. California passed the other measure in the data reliability audit as follows:

Support Orders Performance Level:	99%
Current Payments Performance Level:	99%
Arrearage Payments Performance Level:	99%

“Data Reliability is important because it lends credibility and integrity to California’s Child Support Program and means more money for California children,” Child said.

Please see www.childsup.ca.gov for more information about the California Child Support Program.

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